

Deconstructing Visual Images of 1Malaysia

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Abstract

As Malaysia is a multiracial country, Prime Minister Najib has introduced the concept of 1Malaysia to protect each ethnic group and to bring unity to the country. To inform people about the importance of unity, media has been employed to publicize the concept by distributing images of 1Malaysia logo. 1Malaysia is being fetishized now so much so that even public transportations are painted with the 1Malaysia logo. To an outsider eye, this fetishization seems absolutely surprising and complex. Through deconstructing images of 1Malaysia in media from an outsider perspective, this paper examines the function of these visual discourses on Malaysians and tries to answer the question that whether the Malay, Chinese and Indian perceive themselves together as 1-Malaysians. We argue that Malaysia is still a work in progress to achieve 'unity in diversity.'

Keywords: Malaysia, 1Malaysia, images, unity, diversity, ethnicity

1. Introduction

The concept of 1Malaysia is a vision introduced and propagated in 2009 by the sixth Malaysian Prime Minister, YAB Datuk Seri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak, days after he was sworn in. He defined 1Malaysia as being "we stand, we think and we act as Malaysians." The concept, introduced to protect the rights of all ethnic groups in Malaysia and to bring Malaysia forward to a better future, is seen as an approach that yearns to harmonize the society as one functioning unit without taking into account the background of various cultures and traditions. It is, indeed, a political agenda that nurtures on communal traits or unanimity amongst the society's different ethnicities. Given the fact that Malaysia is a multicultural country where the population consists of many races and ethnicities, there is an urge to instill unity amongst the people. In fact, uniting the nation is not a new phenomenon in Malaysia, and it dates back to the immediate post-independence period in 1957 when socio-economic and cultural differences led to racial tension. Years later in 1969, the ethnic conflict that occurred was not because of ethnic hate but due to socio-economic problems between the ethnicities. Since then, the government has been trying to tackle the issue of racial tension by introducing different programs, such as the New Economic Development (NED) introduced in 1971, to accomplish national unity.

The current government has been promoting the 1Malaysia concept through various ways. Prime Minister Najib has instructed his government to first educate the current and future civil servants, community leaders and the politicians on the importance of national unity through the concept of 1Malaysia; then he asked the government to teach the general public the importance and value of 1Malaysia through a wide range of activities, one of which has been the propagation of the visual images of 1Malaysia through the media. National unity in a country where each ethnicity has its own unique culture and heritage, such as language, belief system, tradition and religion, is a strenuous task. To help the government promote the concept of 1Malaysia, media has been recruited to educate the grassroots on the significance of unity by promoting cross-cultural understanding, tolerance and acceptance of other ethnics, cultures and religions. Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) and many private media organizations have produced numerous programs to publicize 1Malaysia. The hiring and performances of hosts/actors with different ethnicities is one means of promoting national unity. The media has been instructed to instill in people the 1Malaysia concepts and its eight values namely 'the culture of Excellence, perseverance, humility, acceptance, loyalty, meritocracy, education and integrity.'

Through the construction of images of 1Malaysia in the media, the government seeks to change the mentality of Malaysians from tolerance of differences to acceptance. This is because tolerance bears an undertone that people are too much exposed to an agonizing or unpleasant condition due to their religious and ethnic differences. However, acceptance denotes that all the people in Malaysia accept and comprehend the diversity of Malaysian multiracial nation which could be an asset to the country. Everyday people see images of 1Malaysia on the television, billboards and newspapers. 1Malaysia is being fetishized now so much so that even public

transportations are painted with the 1Malaysia logo. To an outsider's eye, this fetishization seems surprising and complex. Deconstructing the images of 1Malaysia in media through an outsider's perspective reveals the function of these visual discourses on Malaysians. It also assists in understanding whether the everyday exposure of people to the images of 1Malaysia help them achieve national unity to perceive themselves together as 1-Malaysians, regardless of their background and despite the long existing social cleavage since the immediate post-independence era.

2. Historical background of 1Malaysia

1Malaysia concept is an idea for developing the spirit of solidarity amongst the populace of Malaysia irrespective of their ethnic backgrounds. The idea of building and unifying a nation in Malaysia was instituted prior to the introduction of *Malayan Union*, during the endeavor in decolonizing the country from the British (Husin 2011). The concept of '*Negara-Cita-Melayu*' was one of the initiatives in building a nation accompanied by the slogan *Melayu-Raya* which engaged the cooperation of both Malaya and Indonesia's nationalists. The tie became solid and stronger as they had many commonalities such as religion, language and tradition. However, it was a difficult task to accomplish the unity because of the differences in the Malay's social ideologies and background (Embong 2000). Nevertheless, they tried to put aside their dissimilarities and fought for the independence of their country. The ethnic based political parties of *United Malays National Organization* (UMNO) that represented the Malays, *Malayan Chinese Association* (MCA) which embodied the ethnic Chinese and *Malayan Indian Congress* (MIC) that acted for Indians were merged to achieve political unity to gain independence. Following the independence in 1957, these ethnic political parties decided to collaborate in governing Malaya as Parti Perikatan (Alliance Party) (Hashim & Mahpuz 2011).

Since independence, the three political parties of the Alliance Party have been the ruling coalition in Malaysia; the Alliance Party created a bigger coalition in 1974 namely *Barisan Nasional* (National Front) by taking other smaller parties under its wing. Hashim and Mahpuz (2011: 116) argue that "before gaining independence, the three major ethnic groups agreed on a compromise that Malays would hold on to their position as political custodians whilst the Chinese and Indian citizens would be free to practice their cultural traditions." The socio-economic and cultural differences were rife in the immediate post-independence era in Malaysia. The country suffered from a sharp division of wealth between the Chinese and the Malays. The Chinese were involved in mining, manufacturing and construction while the Malays were largely concentrated in traditional agricultural activities where they were suffering from low income (Zubedy 2012). The Malays were unhappy with Chinese who were perceived as people controlling a large portion of the country's economy while the Chinese were not satisfied with the Malays because they were monopolizing the political system of the country. The socio-economic imbalance resulted in casualties, deaths and was a menace to segregate the nation. This social unease came to its head during the 1960s which ended in the racial riot of 1969.

Although order was finally restored, the bloody riot modified the course of the country's political history. The ruling government came up with a plan to reduce the detrimental effect of poverty and economic differences along the racial lines. The New Economy Policy (NEP) was launched as an affirmative action plan in 1971. The implementation of NEP was set for a period of twenty years to eradicate poverty by creating a more balanced economic growth and wealth redistribution between the Malays and the non-Malays. The primary goal of the NEP was achieving national unity and social stability by restructuring the economy of the country. According to the official reports, there was a dramatic decrease in percentage of household living below poverty line amongst all ethnic groups. It has been reduced from 49.3% in 1970 to 17.1% in 1990, when the NEP came to a close. However, the NEP was not a comprehensive success as it failed to assist many non-Bumiputeras who should have benefitted from the affirmative action. The NEP's result data indicates that the non-Bumiputeras' share of wealth rose to 46.8% in 1990; however, according to Zubedy (2012), out of 44.9% of the share was owned by the Chinese, 1% to the Indians and 0.7% to others. Once the NEP expired, in 1991 the government launched a ten year National Development Policy (NDP) as a substitute to accomplish the national unity.

In continuation of the struggle to achieve the national unity, Vision 2020 was introduced by the then Prime Minister, YAB Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. Vision 2020 was launched to be a long-term goal for Malaysia to become a fully developed country by year 2020. Following the other two predecessor policies, Vision 2020 also aimed at achieving national unity where "Malaysians would no longer be identified by their ethnic groups but their nationality" (Hashim & Mahpuz 2011: 116). The Vision 2020 states that Malaysia should be a united nation by the year 2020, infused by "strong moral and ethnic values, living in a society that is democratic, liberal, caring, economically just and equitable, progressive and prosperous, and in full possession of an economy that is competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient" (Rahman 1993). Therefore, the Vision's aim was not only concentrated in the field of economy, rather the aim was a development in multiple fronts. According to

Mahathir Mohamad (1991: 1), Vision 2020 will be achieved when Malaysia is a fully developed nation in all dimensions: "economically, politically, socially, spiritually, psychologically and culturally," and when Malaysia "is fully developed in terms of national unity and social cohesion, in terms of... economy, in terms of social justice, political stability, system of government, quality of life..." To achieve these developments, Mahathir introduced nine strategic challenges that needed to be addressed. The challenges are:

1. Establishing a united Malaysian nation made up of one Bangsa Malaysia (Malaysian nation)
2. Creating a psychologically liberated, secure and developed Malaysian society
3. Fostering and developing a mature democratic society
4. Establishing a fully moral and ethical society
5. Establishing a mature, liberal and tolerant society
6. Establishing a scientific and progressive society
7. Establishing a fully caring society
8. Ensuring an economically just society, in which there is fair and equitable distribution of wealth of the nation
9. Establishing a prosperous society with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient

During his premiership, Mahathir Mohamad modernized the country. However, as the chief architect of Modern Malaysia, he never approved of the Eurocentrism that he perceived in Malaysians' psyche. He repudiated the western liberal concept of human right as he was of the idea that it could damage the culture and the religious belief of Malaysians (Mahathir & Ishiara 1995). Worried about the impact of western individualism and the future of Malaysian traditions, he implemented the 'Look East' policy to express his disapproval against 'Western values.' The 'Asian Values' debate led by Mahathir was an attack on the "hegemony of Western presumptions of cultural superiority" (Beng 2006:49). Ever since after Mahathir, the three development policies of NEP, NDP and Vision 2020 are being followed by the governments as they are institutionalized within the Malaysia's policies. Each introduced policy, which carries the concept of compromise and tolerance with a trace of Islamic elements, is a continuation of the three development policies with the same objective of uniting the nation (Hashim & Mahpuza 2011). Mahathir's successor, Abdullah Badawi took over the reign in 2004. He introduced the '*Islam Hadhari*' concept as an expansion of the other three development policies focusing on Asian values with a firm input on Islam and the Malay agenda.

'*Islam Hadhari*' was propagated as a method of 'progressive' or 'civilization' Islam that stresses on progress and development in consistent with the creed of Islam concentrating on improving the quality of life (Badawi 2006). '*Islam Hadhari*' was introduced as an effective approach to deal with different matters and problems affecting the nation as it encourages consensus building (*musyawarah*) and highlights the significance of consultative process (*shura*) (Badawi 2006). Although the encouraged social harmony and economic development were consistent with the tenets of Islam, it aimed at pleasing and assuring the non-Malay Muslims of their equal rights as citizens of Malaysia (Bashi 2006); hence, the main objective was unifying the nation. Through the practice of a productive economic system, *Islam Hadhari* aimed to accomplish a unified and equitable development that produces an informed people who respect the Asian values and are ready to face global challenges. Upon ascending to the country's highest public office, Badawi's successor, Sri Najib Tun Razak, has asked the Malaysians to stick together with him to revitalize the country and make the multicultural Malaysia a unified and a developed nation. He introduced the 1Malaysia concept with the slogan *People First, Performance Now*. His 1Malaysia concept is also an extension of earlier policies to promote unity amongst the three main ethnicities to achieve Vision 2020.

On the concept of 1Malaysia, Najib confirms that the concept is not a new phenomenon as it is a continuation of what was pursued since the Late Tunku Abdul Rahman. It is an extension of the efforts of the first Prime Minister who formed the Alliance Party and assisted achieve Malaysia's independence in 1957, pursued by the second Prime Minister who set up a bigger coalition of political parties, namely the National Front (The Star 2010). As national unity has been made top priority in each prior government, Najib also felt the responsibility to pursue the agenda of eliminating poverty, restructuring the society and broadening the quality education for all Malaysians regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Like the other previous development policies and in

alignment with achieving Vision 2020, the concept of 1Malaysia focuses on the spirit of tolerance and social justice. His slogan of '*People First, Performance Now*' acts as a guide in policies and programs; it also directs his vision in economy and politics and helps him in monitoring the government. 'People First' essentially refers to the agenda that the welfare of people, irrespective of their ethnic background, should be the government's primary concern. '*Performance Now*' is the government's concern in generating a high quality performance that would help people to prosper (Husin 2011).

Realizing the significance for any government to have the trust of the grassroots, Najib has asked the government to be honest to the people (Bernama 2009). To achieve 1Malaysia, Najib has introduced eight values that should be internalized within the system of government and the public. These values which are inter-related to each other are 'the culture of Excellence, perseverance, humility, acceptance, loyalty, meritocracy, education and integrity.' In the spirit of 1Malaysia and to monitor his own government, Prime Minister Najib has implemented National Key Result Area (NKRA) and Key Performance Indicators (KPI). As the government's target, the NKRA is a focus on six momentous issues of 'reducing crimes, war against corruption, widening the access to affordable and quality of education, raising living standards of the low income earners, upgrading infrastructure in the rural areas and the interior region, and improving public transportation in a moderated period of time.' For each area, KPI has been set to monitor the performances of ministries and to measure the progress of the changes (Sani et al. 2009). All these measures are taken to unite the multiracial society through eradicating poverty and eliminating the racial conflicts. Right from the start, 1Malaysia has been aiming to achieve 'unity in diversity' by instilling in people of various ethnicities the attitude of acceptance and mutual respect.

3. The Images of 1Malaysia

The chief step in making 1Malaysia a reality is educating the general public about the significance of the 1Malaysia concept. In doing so, the media is employed to reach out to the people as it has the potentiality to impact people's beliefs and the power to educate the public on the importance of unity in diversity by accepting other ethnicities' cultures and religions. Media organizations play key roles in delivering the information about the policy of the government to the nation (Osman & Abu Baker 2008). Various types of media have been recruited to propagate the 1Malaysia concept to the public such as television programs, newspapers, radio, advertisements and not to mention the 1Malaysia website and the social media. As an offshoot of media, advertisement is the most powerful and widespread tool that influences people. Being ubiquitous in people's everyday lives, it conveys messages into our consciousness at every turn. People are constantly exposed to visual advertisements that affect their perceptions. Images of advertisements are socializing agents that affect people's attitude, beliefs, values and behaviors (Kang 1997). In Malaysia, the 1Malaysia logo, which was introduced along with the launch of 1Malaysia concept, has been advertised widely. The logo consists of the symbol of '1' which incorporates the Malaysian flag and the term Malaysia (figure 1). It has been designed to symbolize all Malaysians irrespective of their ethnic background; the logo epitomizes that all Malaysians belong to one nation.



Fig. 1. The 1Malaysia logo

To popularize 1Malaysia concept, the entire Malaysia is blanketed with the logo of 1Malaysia. The mass advertising and the publicity materials have made it ubiquitous in Malaysia. This publicity has been turned into fetishization as Malaysians are besieged with the 1Malaysia logo on billboards, pedestrian bridges and flyovers, trains and train tickets, supermarkets, buildings and clinics, and it is even a brand (figure 2). The repetitive use of 1Malaysia logo in promoting the 1Malaysia concept aims to help the Malaysians understand the concept 1Malaysia. However, many Malaysians are still dubious and confused about the idea of 1Malaysia, and many are still unsure what the concept is exactly. The numeric one painted with the Malaysian flag attempts to connote that Malaysian national culture is composed of diversities but united as a nation. On diversity in Malaysia, Prime Minister Najib states: "What makes Malaysia unique is the diversity of our people. 1Malaysia's goal is to preserve and enhance this unity in diversity which has always been our strength and remains our best hope for the future" (1Malaysia website 2009). To a great number of Malaysians, Prime Minister Najib's 1Malaysia is just

a political rhetoric as it is argued that it has not helped reducing racial conflict. Although Malaysia has not witnessed any major racial tensions since the bloody incident of 13 May, there have always been teething problems among the ethnic groups.



Fig. 2. The publicity of 1Malaysia

The fetishization of the 1Malaysia logo speaks for itself and is indicative of the fact that racial tension still exists despite the government's seemingly hard effort to resolve it. Malaysians are oversaturated with the images that support 1Malaysia logo as well; there are pictures of seemingly happy Malaysians of all races raising their index fingers as a symbol of 1Malaysia (figure 3). These images which symbolize 1Malaysia, show people from various ethnics who gather together to represent the unity; these images connote 'we are all one irrespective of our background.' The prevalence of these pictures is supposed to incite people for a unity and consolidate peace and harmony. Sprouted from media, images play very significant roles in facilitating communication between divided communities and have the capability to humanize their relationship (Arai 2009). The pervasiveness of these images apparently made many people of Malaysia agree that a compromised and tolerant race relation is the key for a better Malaysia, but yet they are not ready to discard their racial conflict and be united. Despite the exposure to these images, many Malaysians still like to socialize with their own ethnic groups (Ismail & Ahmad 2014) and they seem to be nonchalant to racial integration (Ismail Abdullah 2009). Ethnocentrism is the cause in this disunity. Muzaffar (2010) argues that Malaysia is not a racist society rather it is an ethnocentric society. When "each community becomes overly ethnocentric, inter-ethnic harmony is threatened" (Ridzuan et al. 2012: 518).



Fig. 3. people of Malaysia supporting 1Malaysia

The concept of 1Malaysia is surely achieved just in visual representations but these images cannot be too successful in achieving the 1Malaysia objectives in the real world as the elusive unity is plagued by ethnocentric and ethno-religious rifts. On the ethnocentric division, Shamsul A. B. (2013: 1) argues that “conflict persists in Malaysia, it has merely turned non-violent. This continuity is because of the inherent contradictions that shape the social dynamics of Malaysian society. These non-violent, mostly verbal conflicts are generated by deep-seated grievances, prejudices and stereotypes.” The prejudices and stereotypes of ethnocentrism can lead to an environment where the dominant sect of a certain community is reluctant to tolerate the other community's perspectives.

4. Responses to 1Malaysia

1Malaysia received different receptions amongst Malaysians. It was eagerly embraced by some and seen as a vehicle to reinforce the creation of a Malaysian race and unification through economic and political transformation projects (Sharif, 2012). Some other took it less seriously and criticized the concept as a regime sustaining concept rather than a nation building one. These people see the concept as one that offers but does not carry out; one that mollifies without actualizing changes. Although the current government had put a lot of effort in integrating the nation through different visions and ideologies propagated by media, it is still a strenuous task to be accomplished as ethnocentrism is rampant amongst the different ethnic groups. The penchant to keep one's culture and tradition fiercely has made the country's leaders proposed ideologies rhetorical in nature (Husin 2011). Many Malaysians, especially Chinese and Indians, express their disapproval of the 1Malaysia concept. To record these responses for the purpose of this research, data were collected from 2013-2014 texts and images in social media and interview with people. Discourse analysis was utilized to analyze how the responses further the ethnocentricity in Malaysia. One of these platforms that help Malaysians express their objection to the concept is online social media as it hosts a less supportive platform for the governments. These people have been using the social media as a vehicle to popularize their disapproval. In response to the 1Malaysia logo, they have designed images to scoff the 1Malaysia concept which suggest that 1Malaysia is just a political rhetoric with no policy agenda and is failing to achieve its objectives (figure 4). The images insinuate that the 1Malaysia logo should be replaced with ‘1Malay’ as it is mainly supporting the Malay and aims to maintain the UMNO in power.



Fig. 4. Responses to 1Malaysia logo

These counter images of 1Malaysia propagated in social media indicate that the fetishization of 1Malaysia logo is not the answer to the ethnic conflicts and unity problems. Social media such as Facebook has become a venue for non-Malays to articulate their concern and discontent with the 1Malaysia concept. Seeing any images about racial unity or 1Malaysia in Facebook will instigate non-Malays to express their denunciation. A Facebook image of Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad asserting “In Malaysia, despite our policies, do you see the Chinese poor? The Indians are professionals, they are lawyers and doctors. Those who didn’t come to Malaysia are not so fortunate” (figure 5) yielded so many replies. Most of the replies are about the marginalization of the Chinese and Indians. Below are some instances of the many replies:

- a. *u should think what went wrong...non Malays r bullied n marginalised n yet they r doing well. Malays r treated special n yet majority doing simple office work. Malays from local uni only can work for the gov't not international firms...why? Most Malays still poor but few r super rich(BN leaders n cronies) .*

- U r still so proud n keep calling non Malays to migrate. U r killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. Statistics tells u that **non Malays** pay the most taxes!*
- b. *Irritating. does he know that I sold my house to send my daughter to study and I'm taking loans after loans? And does he know how many **Indians** and **Chinese** doing that to make their kids achieve their dream?*
- c. ***Chinese** r rich bcos they worked hard n **Indians** r professionals bcos they study hard. **Malays** r still poor despite all the opportunities bcos they **r pampered...period!***



Fig. 5. Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's quote

The replies to the image show the level of intolerance of the ethnic groups. A personal anecdote will confirm such a sentiment: while researching for this paper and since the aim of 1Malaysia logo propagation is to educate the grassroots, one of us, as an outsider residing in Malaysia, decided to interview some taxi drivers whose cars were painted with 1Malaysia logo. Below is a sample of the data interviewing people:

In a taxi with a Malay driver:

Driver: why didn't you take all those taxis plying for hire?

Me: It's a daylight robbery

*D: Never approach an **Indian** taxi. They never use meter, right?*

M: yes, some of them never. I don't know why there is no taxi agency or sth to monitor or ask them to go by the law?

*D: there is. Here is the number; next time you call them. **We are fair but these Indians and some Chinese always want much.***

M: Do you believe in 1Malaysia?

*D: I do but these **Indians** and **Chinese** would never want Malaysia to be 1Malaysia.*

M: What do you mean? then, why do you have 1Malaysia logo all over your taxi?

*D: **They** are living in **our country** and they are making troubles for us.*

In a taxi with an Indian driver:

M: Are you Indian?

D: No, I am not.

M: I know but you might be Indian originally.

D: Yes, my grandfather was Indian. But me, my parents and siblings are born and bred in Malaysia.

M: what do you think of 1Malaysia?

*D: It's just **politics** to gain **non-Malay** votes.*

M: Why do you think it's just politics? Don't you have a good life here?

*D: Because all the authorities are **Malay**. They have **the upper hand** in everything. Sometime we feel like we are the **second citizen** here. We have to work hard but **Malays** don't have to work hard. They earn easy money.*

M: But I've heard that Airasia's CEO is Indian.

*D: That's a private company. Besides he is smart. **Malays** are not really smart but they have the final say in everything. My son wanted to go abroad for his studies but his application got rejected for scholarship but **Malays** always are the one who win the scholarship.*

*M: How about **Chinese**? Do you think they are happy here?*

*D: They are very rich and run the country's economy. They won't let **us** step into economy.*

In a taxi with a Chinese driver:

M: Sir, I am researching about 1Malaysia. What do you know about it?

D: It means we are all one, lah.

M: so it's like Chines, Indians, and Malays are all one. But you have different cultures and languages. How can it be possible to be one despite all these differences? Are you really 1Malaysian?

D: Yes, we have those differences but we should respect the differences.

M: Do you really respect?

D: What would you like to hear? That we are not in good terms? How long have you been here?

M: 4 years

*D: Didn't you still understand that there are **racial conflicts** in Malaysia and **we are not getting along very well**? Ok, get off and give me my money.*

Using discourse analysis, the discriminatory discourses in texts and interviews are located in this research. What is conspicuously rampant in these discourses is the ethnocentricity of the Malaysians. The above-mentioned statements clearly exhibit that the ubiquitous 1Malaysia logo did not help much in reducing the racial and ethnic conflicts. The issue of ethnicity has always been problematic and explosive. The ethnic groups are not accepting one another rather they are tolerating each other. The attitude of mutual respect, acceptance and trust between people of different ethnicities is a sine qua non for a better Malaysia. Although the governments have been struggling to remove racial tension and ethnic conflicts by various ideologies through media, these tensions and conflicts are still present in the country. Eradicating ethnocentrism is a laborious task and cannot be resolved by any government if people are not willing to let go. Some major changes need to be seen in people of all ethnicities for a better Malaysia. Creating a harmonious multiracial Malaysia requires Malaysians of all races and ethnicities to unite. The on-going agenda of building the nation will never happen unless there is equitable distribution of wealth in the country by the governments. Despite the existing various cultural and religious differences in Malaysia, ethnic groups could settle their differences by having informal interactions (Sardar 2000).

5. Conclusion

Given the fact that Malaysia is a multiracial country, uniting the nation has been the political agenda of each government since independence. From NEP to NDP through Vision 2020 and 1Malaysia, the primary aim has been to achieve unity in diversity and to bring Malaysia forward to a better future. As one of these agendas, 1Malaysia concept was introduced by Prime Minister Najib to protect the rights of each ethnic group and unite the nation. To educate the public about the significance of unity in diversity, the media plays key roles in disseminating the 1Malaysia logo which aims at instilling unity. Malaysians are oversaturated with images of 1Malaysia logo which are supposed to help people in accepting other ethnicities' cultures and religions. Despite the ubiquity of the 1Malaysia images in Malaysia, people are not ready yet to discard their racial conflict. The images of 1Malaysia blanket the country in the hope of teaching people to be united. However, ethnocentrism is a deterrent factor to this achievement. Although engulfed by 1Malaysia images, most of the Malays, Chinese and Indians do not perceive themselves together as 1- Malaysians. Unity will be accomplished if there is a national identity that could be shared to enhance one's fidelity towards the country more than to one's ethnicity. Unity will remain a dream as long as there is a sturdy affinity towards the ethnic. The agenda in integrating the nation has not been yet successful as the government's agendas seem to be marginalizing the minority ethnics and people cannot let go of their racial differences. Therefore, Malaysia is still a work in progress in achieving 'unity in diversity.'

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